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The Shisdesiatnyky

The following are members of the group of young Soviet Ukrainian writers who call themselves the "Shisdesiatnyky" (writers of the 60's):

Poets: Lena KOSTENKO, Mykola VINHRANOVSKY, Ivan DRACH, Vitaly KOROTYCH, Evhen HUTSALO (all members of the Union of Writers of the Ukraine or the SPU - Soyuz Pismenykyv Ukrainy). Poets of lesser importance and not members of the SPU: Mykola KLYMENKO, Mykola SYNHAYIVSKY, Volodymyr PIDPALY. Petro SKUNETS' (member of the SPU) and Robert TRETYAKOV (a Russian who writes in Ukrainian) both write in accordance with the Soviet Communist Party line.

Writers of Prose: Volodymyr DROZD (member of SPU), Fedor BOYKO, Valery SHEVCHUK, Yuriy KOVAL', and of lesser popularity, Evhan HUTSALO, and Ivan DRACH.

Critics: Ivan TSYUPA and Ivan DZYUBA.

Except for Lena KOSTENKO, who is the eldest, all members of the group are between the ages of 22 and 27 (having been born in the years 1936 to 1941). Lena KOSTENKO's first collection of poems was published in 1957. She remained silent during 1958-1960, but her works began to appear again in 1961 after a number of poems by young writers were published in the newspapers.

The poetry and prose written by this group is very modern in form, as well as, to some extent, in its subject matter. Official Soviet critics characterize it as: "conspicuous of a thirst for seeking of new ways, new forms, new topics and new words."

The works of Ukrainian literators of the 1920's and 30's who were liquidated by the regime have a big influence on these young writers. Their writing is also influenced by their familiarity (though limited) with literature of satellite countries (Poland) and with Western literature, especially Hemmingway and Salinger, and with works of modern art - VanGogh, Vrubel', Saroyan, Picasso, and the Ukrainian so-called school of the liquidated Boychuk and Krychevsky.

On 20 March 1962, at the demand of Party forces, there was a meeting of the Presidium of the SPU which was devoted entirely to discussions of the young writers and their works. The Presidium of the SPU decided to put the young poets under the protection of the well known Party glorifier, Pavlo TYCHYNA, and the prose writers under the protection of V. PYANOV, secretary of the young peoples commission. A number of the young writers were accepted into the SPU.

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74-124-29/3

Since that time articles have appeared in the Soviet Ukrainian press both for and against the young writers.

To strengthen Party leadership of the journal, Vitchyzna, on 29 June 1962, Lyubomyr DMITERKO, who has criticized the works of the young writers, was named chief editor in place of D. KAPYTSYA.

It is believed all the young writers are members of the Komsomol and officially, Soviet patriots. Their Ukrainian patriotism is revealed basically in their defense of the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian culture, in their criticism of Stalinist methods. They consider that Stalin and the Communist Party betrayed the cause of the revolution of 1917. They seek out and add to history names of Soviet Ukrainian writers liquidated by the Stalin regime. They strive for greater freedom of expression and for cultural ties with the Western world. In addition to this, they criticize America and the Western world for the lack of initiative toward their treatment of, the nationality problem of the USSR and, more widely, regarding coexistence with the past and present Soviet regime or government of the USSR, for the lack of support of the Hungarian Revolution, the liquidation of which severed the internal struggle and demands for further relaxations. They also criticize the capitalist system as they understand it from official Soviet propaganda.

Logically, we must understand that the group of young writers did not emerge from itself but that it came into being from a background of a wider and deeper movement of present day youth in the USSR as well as in the Ukraine, and the dissatisfaction or opposition which this youth reveals in hidden forms against the present regime. We must accept the fact that among today's youth this movement is much deeper and more important than the young writers reveal mainly because they try to write in a way which will insure the publication of their works and which will not give cause for them to be accused of deviation from Communist principles, the spirit of Leninism, etc. That is why these young literators write certain works in the spirit of the official party line, and, not only are they aware of this but, those in charge of the party line are also aware of it.

We must examine this not only from the standpoint of the young writers but mainly from the standpoint of the young generation and the trends which are developing in its midst. Our immediate tasks should be:

1. To attempt to aid the Ukrainian youth in their opposition moods and in their aspirations for greater freedom and respect of individual worth via:

- a. Increased individual or group contacts.
- b. Mailing of books, press, brochures in more intensified form than in the past and by other new means.

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c. The use of radio, and later television, to increase as much as possible the transmission of information and commentaries on all important events in the USSR and, simultaneously, the development and transmittal of a series of lectures on topics of history, culture, language, the liberation struggles of nations, the liquidation of colonialism in the world, the cooperation and friendships between people, nations, etc.

2. To publish the works of the young writers and intensify contacts with them via:

a. The publication (through American publishers) in the English language, of a collection of their poems.

b. The preparation and transmittal to them of several collections of works by Ukrainian emigre writers and translations of poetry (of poets throughout the world) of a pure literary character.

c. The proposal to them for a meeting in New York on Western Europe with young Ukrainian writers in the emigration for the purpose of reading their poetry and exchanging ideas and views, a gathering of pure literary character.

d. The proposal of a visit of several young Ukrainian emigre writers to the Ukraine for official contact with young writers there.

e. An endeavor to obtain from young writers in the Ukraine their works for publication in the West in Ukrainian and other languages.

We have to accept the fact that, in addition to the interest by the young Soviet writers, the KGB also will be interested in establishing contacts with individuals or groups. It can be expected that the KGB will not agree to such contacts to be held in New York or Europe, but such a refusal will also prove useful to us. We can also doubt that the Party leaders will agree to having the works of emigre writers published in the Soviet press, but this also will be proof that not we, but they, forbid free speech even in pure cultural or literary form.

We are consistently reprinting certain works by the young writers and in the near future there will appear a collection of poems by Lena KOSTENKO, M. VINHRANOV'S'KY, V. KOROTYCH, I. DRACH and E. HUTSALO.

The question of the distribution of books and the printed word in the Ukraine is very important. The channels we have used to date will soon be exhausted and it is necessary to seek new means and new channels. The same is true of radio. Voice of American and Radio Liberty have only limited possibilities in the content of their broadcasts. They are beneficial, but they are not enough, particularly for the young generation. It is necessary to have radio programs directed specifically at the youth, programs which would appeal to their aspirations,

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their interest, and their <sup>mentality</sup> ~~personality~~, programs which would stimulate and, at the same time, educate them. It is not necessary to explain here the important role radio broadcasts, books, and the printed word can play in the present situation if they can reach the listener.

The United States Government and State Department position toward the nationality question in the USSR remains an open question. The position to date is not only negative but in fact, hostile. We mention it because not only does it not contribute to our position, but, on the contrary, it creates a big obstacle in the establishment of contacts and in the position individuals in the USSR (and the Ukraine) can take toward the Western world and particularly toward the U.S.A.

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